**Horace Grant Underwood (1917-2004)**

Dr. Horace Grant Underwood, a member of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society since 1939, a councillor, and a former president of the Society, passed away on January 15，2004 following a brief illness. Born in Seoul of missionary parents on October 11, 1917, Dr. Underwood spent virtually his entire life in Korea except for brief periods abroad for education in the United States and for military service in the Pacific Theater. He was born into a well-known Presbyterian missionary family, and his grandfather was one of the first Protestant missionaries who landed at Incheon on Easter Sunday 1885. For over a century the Underwood family has been associated with Korea and its people and institutions.

Dr. Underwcxxl grew up in Korea. Following his college education and military service during World War II，he served in various capacities with the U.S. military in Korea, including that of senior interpreter during the Panmunjon Armistice Negotiations, His lifelong service to Yonsei University began in 1939 when he worked as a missionary volunteer English teacher. In the following years he served as Librarian, Acting President, and as a member of the Board of Directors, a positicm he held at the time of his death. He was also the founding Dean of Seoul National University during the years of the U.S. military government in Korea. Professionally he was an educator, and his contributions to higher education are too many to mention here. The fact that four universities bestowed upon him honorary doctorates is testimony to the high esteem in which he was held by his colleagues.

He was also a man who lived and worked in two cultures一 Korean and American. He served numerous Korean-American organizations including the U.S.O. Council, the Seoul Rotary Club, the Fulbright Commission, the Preparations Committee for the Centennial of Korean-American Relations, and the Korea America Friendship Society. His deep love for the Korean people, and his ability to express that love to others made him a popular speaker on Korean culture and history, and he participated in numerous seminars and symposia on Korean- American relations.

Dr. Underwood was a loyal and active member of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, and he was in his own words, “a perennial member of the Council and three terms as President.” As President he presided over the centennial celebrations of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society in 2000. His tours were always in great demand, especially the tour of the churches of Seoul. It is

significant that in December, just a little over a month prior to his death, he spoke to the members of the Royal Asiatic Society. His lecture was so well received that there was talk of scheduling another such lecture in March.

Dr. Underwood was of course a missionary, and served on the boards of numerous church related institutions and organizations. He was a member of the Saemoonan Presbyterian Church in Seoul where he also served as an elder. Throughout his long missionary career he served the Presbyterian Mission and the churches of Korea in just about every possible capacity. One of his final contributions was an informal evening on the Yonsei campus in November with his missionary colleagues during which he shared reminiscences of his long and fruitful life.

It was fitting, therefore, that the tributes given to Dr. Underwood at the Memorial Service in the Luce Chapel at Yonsei University on January 19 were by members of the academic community represented by Dr. Kim Woo-sik, the President of Yonsei University; the American community represented by U.S. Ambassador Thomas Hubbard, and the Christian community represented by the Rev. Kiel Ja-yeon. Dr. Underwood was associated with all three communities, and significantly, members of all three communities are included in the Royal Asiatic Society. The sermon, aptly titled “A Beautiful life,” was delivered by Dr. Underwood’s pastor, the Rev. Soo-young of Saemoonan Presbyterian Church. Members of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society are grateful that he shared so much of his life with us.

Dr. Underwood will be greatly missed by all who knew him. The members of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society express our deepest condolences to the family of Dr. Underwood. His contributions to the Society were substantial, and will be remembered for many generations to come.

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